

Which kind of harness is best?

There are three kinds. The basic 5-point harness has shoulder, hip, and crotch straps. The T-shield or tray-shield takes the place of hip straps to hold the lower body in the seat. Most seats come with a plastic **harness retainer clip** that holds the two shoulder straps together. Keep it at armpit level on your child to hold the harness straps on the shoulders. Special features of harnesses follow:

5-Point Harness

A 5-point harness (**F**) is preferred by many safety experts because the lap part of the harness fits over the child's strong hip bones. This kind of harness can be adjusted to fit snugly on both very small infants and larger children. However, the straps may twist and tangle. Keep the straps flat for maximum protection.

T-Shield

Shoulder straps are attached to a flat pad (**G**). The shield reduces twisting of shoulder straps. It can be buckled quickly with one hand. Some have straps that adjust automatically to fit properly.

Tray-Shield

Shoulder straps are attached to a wide, padded shield (**H**) that swings up. Some shields may not fit over the child's head unless the straps are adjusted each time. This may give you the mistaken idea that your child has outgrown the seat. In some cars, the roof may be too low to allow you to raise the shield completely.

When you use a convertible seat, remember:

Keep it facing the rear as long as possible, until your baby is about one year old and weighs at least 20 pounds. Some convertible seats have rear facing weight limits to 30 lbs.

- Use the upright position when it is facing forward for children over 1 year and at least 20 lbs.
- Move up the harness straps. They must be at or above your child's shoulders. Most seats require use of the top-most slots for the forward-facing position. The top slots are reinforced to prevent the harness from failing in a crash. A few

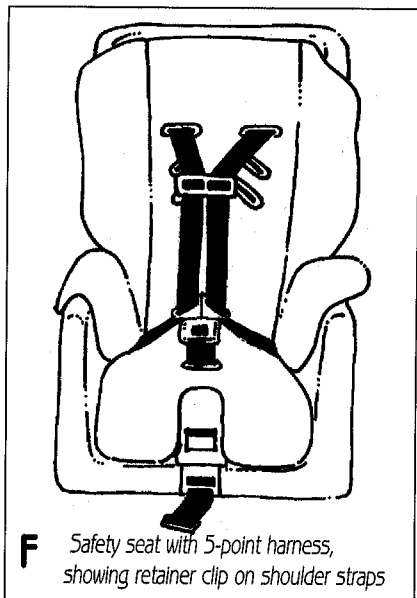
allow use of the center slots; check weight limits in the instructions.

- Use the correct belt path for forward-facing installation.

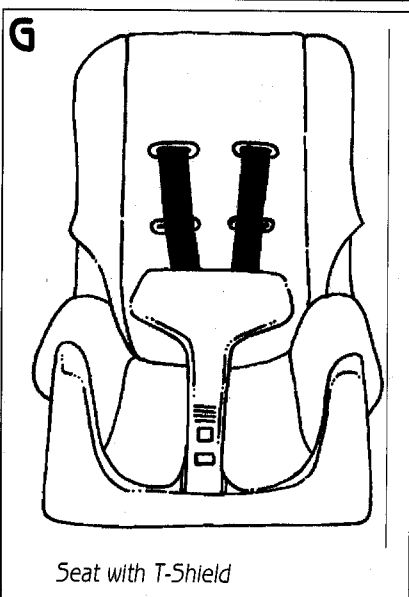
- **Keep your child up to 40 pounds in a safety seat with a harness (I).**

When the child's shoulders are above the top harness slots, move her to an auto booster seat that helps safety belts fit properly (Tip 5).

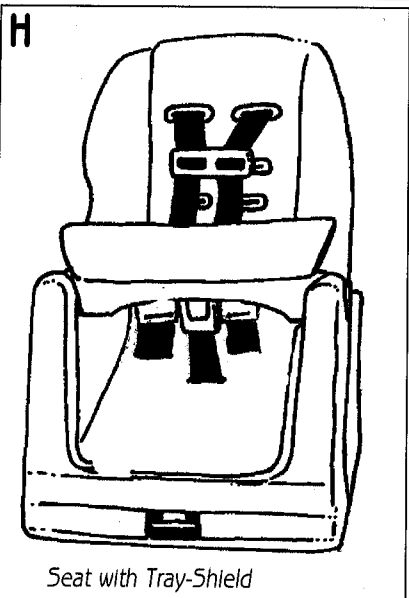
- Always follow the instructions that came with your child's seat.



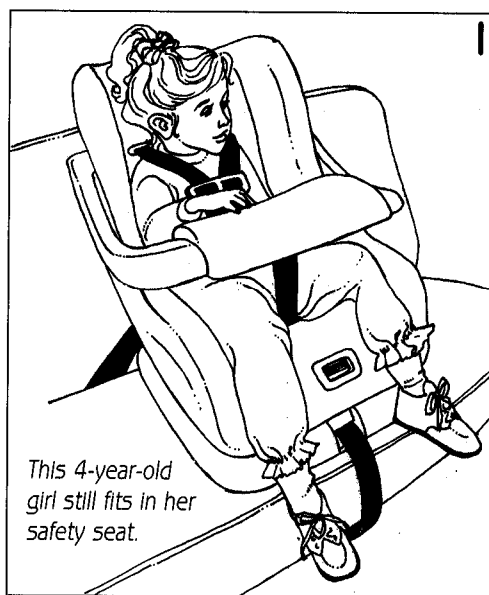
F Safety seat with 5-point harness, showing retainer clip on shoulder straps



Seat with T-Shield



Seat with Tray-Shield



This 4-year-old girl still fits in her safety seat.